

Eleven Tenets of Companioning the Bereaved

By: Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt

Tenet One: Companioning is about being present to another person's pain; it is not about taking away the pain.

Tenet Two: Companioning is about going to the wilderness of the soul with another human being; it is not about thinking you are responsible for finding the way out.

Tenet Three: Companioning is about honoring the spirit; it is not about focusing on the intellect.

Tenet Four: Companioning is about listening with the heart; it is not about analyzing with the head.

Tenet Five: Companioning is about bearing witness to the struggles of others; it is not about judging or directing these struggles.

Tenet Six: Companioning is about walking alongside; it is not about leading or being led.

Tenet Seven: Companioning the bereaved means discovering the gifts of sacred silence; it does not mean filling up every moment with words.

Tenet Eight: Companioning the bereaved is about being still; it is not about frantic movement forward.

Tenet Nine: Companioning is about respecting disorder and confusion; it is not about imposing order and logic.

Tenet Ten: Companioning is about learning from others; it is not about teaching them.

Tenet Eleven: Companioning is about curiosity; it is not about expertise.

***More details related to each tenet listed above is printed in "*The Handbook for Companioning the Mourner: Eleven Essential Principles*" by Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt Ph.D. This book can be purchased online at www.centerforloss.com or by calling the Center for Loss and Life Transition at 970-226-6050.